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136

The Nature and Neceſſity of Religious Reſolution, *in the Defence and Support of a* Good Cauſe, *in Times of Danger and Trial.*

A

SERMON

PREACH'D at the

ASSIZES,

And before the

Univerſity *of OXFORD,*

At St. *Mary's*, on *Thurſday*, *July* 19th. 1705.

By *WILLIAM TILLY*, M.A. Fellow of *C.C.C.* OXON.

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AN ASSIZE-SERMON

Preach'd Before the *Univerſity of OXFORD.*

PROV. XXIV. 10, 11, 12.

10, *If thou faint in the day of adverſity, thy ſtrength is ſmall.*
11, *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and thoſe that are ready to be ſlain:*
12. *If thou ſayeſt, Behold, we knew it not: doth not he that pondereth the heart conſider it? and he that keepeth thy ſoul, doth not he know it? and ſhall not he render to every man according to his works?*

THE very Style or Manner, in which theſe Words are here deliver'd by the *Wiſe Man*, if we obſerve it, is ſomewhat peculiar from the reſt of this Book; and appears plainly to run with more Train and Conſequence than is uſual in a Courſe of Proverbs. And the Reaſon of it we may juſtly ſuppoſe to have been, the Weight and Importance of the Subject, upon which he was engaged; which might well prevail with him (as *Wiſe* a *Man* as he was) to go a little out of his way, to take a nearer View of it; to ſtand and conſider it with more than common Attention, and to draw out and purſue his Reflections on it to a greater length. For 'tis *Courage* and *Reſolution* of Mind in Defence, or in Purſuance of our Duty, againſt, or under, Difficulties, that he makes it his Buſineſs in this place to recommend: A Vertue, which, in the Accounts of mere Reaſon and Nature, ſtood always in the firſt Rank, and had the higheſt Character: And under Chriſtianity 'tis become of ſo much more eſpecial Uſe and Neceſſity, as the Difficulties that lie in the way of our Obedience are liable to be

greater, and our Sufferings for it, more. Beſides that, 'tis not only a main Inſtance of our Chriſtian Practice in it ſelf, but a Guard and Security to all the reſt; of a wide and univerſal Influence upon our whole Conduct; which reaches through all the Diſtinctions and Conditions of Men; and very nearly affects them all, as in their general, ſo in their ſeveral and diſtinct Capacities. Every Man is bound to the Obſervance of it in a greater or leſs Proportion: Indeed Men under a publick Character, in a high Station, more particularly ſo: But at the ſame time not the *meaneſt* and *loweſt* of the *People* can be wholly exempted from its Obligations: Becauſe a private Vertue can be no more ſecure without it long, than a publick Truſt can be well executed. And ſince 'tis a Duty thus excellent and neceſſary in its Nature and Conſequence, and yet learnt at all times with ſo much difficulty, and practis'd ſtill with greater, I hope a Diſcourſe on it, in *theſe Days* at leaſt, will not be thought Unſeaſonable, nor altogether Impertinent to this Occaſion.

I have therefore pitch'd upon theſe Words of *Solomon*, becauſe they expreſs the Duty it ſelf, in ſome of its chiefeſt Inſtances, and contain very powerful Engagements to the Practice of it; in that they preſcribe againſt the Breach and Violation of it, with an Authority and Streſs very peculiar; with an Application highly ſerious and affectionate, grounded upon Arguments, and enforc'd with Appeals drawn from Religion and Conſcience; *If thou faint in the day of adverſity, thy ſtrength is ſmall. If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and thoſe that are ready to be ſlain: If thou ſayeſt, Behold, we knew it not: Doth not he that pondereth the heart conſider it? and he that keepeth thy ſoul, doth not he know it? and ſhall not he render to every man according to his works?*

The Senſe and Force of which Words may be reſolv'd into theſe plain, eaſy Propoſitions: That if our *Courage* and *Reſolution* fail us in a time that moſt requires it, 'tis good for nothing: If, when a juſt and good Cauſe is like to ſuffer, and ſtands in need of our Aſſiſtance, we then withdraw our ſelves upon Motives of our own Security and Advantage, or whatever other Reaſon, and forbear to reſcue it from the Malice and Methods of ill Men; *to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and thoſe that are ready to be ſlain;* Then whatever Pleas and Pretences we may contrive and offer for our ſelves, to hide our Baſeneſs from the World; as if we ſhould ſay, *Behold, we knew it not,* we were not aware that the Truth was in ſo much Danger, or of the Conſequences of our Neglect, Yet God ſees through the Vanity and Hypocriſy of them all, and will not fail to call Men to a ſevere Account for ſuch Behaviour; *Doth not he that pondereth the heart*

heart conſider it? and he that keepeth thy ſoul, doth not he know it? and ſhall not he render to every man according to his works?

According to this Explication of the Words, and within the Compaſs of it, I ſhall proceed in my following Diſcourſe; and ſince 'tis plain from *Solomon*, that ſome ſort of *Reſolution* in Men may fail, and one need not the Wiſdom and Obſervation of *Solomon* to convince him in theſe Days it may do ſo,

I ſhall therefore endeavour, in the *Firſt* place, to ſtate the true Nature of *Courage* and *Reſolution* in general, and ſhew upon what Principles it muſt be form'd, and with what Conditions qualify'd, if ever we deſign it ſhould ſtand out againſt thoſe many Powerful Arguments, that may tempt us to forego it.

Secondly, I ſhall obſerve, That Times of Danger and Difficulty, when the Cauſe of Truth comes to ſuffer, and, it may be, is ready to ſink for want of a Support, are the moſt proper Seaſon in which we are to expreſs our *Reſolution*, and that, if it then fail, 'twas never real and well grounded: *If thou faint in the day of adverſity, thy ſtrength is ſmall. If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and thoſe that are ready to be ſlain.*

Thirdly, I ſhall conſider, and try to anſwer, the Excuſes that Men may poſſibly make, and have uſually done ſo, for deſerting, or not defending a good Cauſe, when it was certainly their Duty, and within their Power to encourage it: And this from hence, *If thou ſayeſt, Behold, we knew it not:* For that theſe Words were intended by way of an Excuſe, and as Palliations for a baſe and cowardly Spirit, is plain from their Coherence with the other.

Fourthly and *Laſtly*, by way of Application, I ſhall draw nearer to the preſent Deſign of this Aſſembly; and, as ſome have thought, to the more particular Intendment of my Text; and ſhall crave leave to repreſent the Neceſſity there is of a firm *Courage* and *Reſolution* of Mind in thoſe, that are more immediately entruſted with the Adminiſtration of Judgment and Juſtice; as they tender a right Execution of their Charge, and will anſwer it to *God, the Judge of all men*, at the great *Tribunal: If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and theſe that are ready to be ſlain: Doth not he that pondereth the heart conſider it? and he that keepeth thy ſoul, doth not he know it? and ſhall not he render to every man according to his works?*

And, *Firſt*, I ſhall endeavour to ſtate the true Nature of *Courage* and *Reſolution* in general, and ſhew upon what Principles it muſt be

form'd, and with what Conditions qualify'd, if ever we deſign it ſhould ſtand out againſt thoſe many powerful Arguments that may tempt us to forego it.

By *Reſolution*, here properly taken, we are to underſtand a firm and ſteddy Purpoſe of Mind, that a Man forms to himſelf, to maintain and purſue his Duty, what Difficulties ſoever he may encounter, or whatever Inconveniences he may ſuffer by it. And the Reaſonableneſs of this is founded upon a plain infallible Truth, That the leaſt Sin whatever is of greater Conſequence, and with more Care to be avoided, than the utmoſt Sufferings of the preſent Life. So that according to this Account of *Reſolution*, we ſee the Matter, about which it is employ'd, is a point of Duty, ſomething Good or Evil, either in its own Nature, or as enjoin'd by ſome Law of God or Man: And 'tis clear from hence it is ſo, becauſe *Reſolution*, in the Senſe we now conſider it, is a moral Duty, improv'd upon Principles of Religion; which muſt therefore always reſpect an Object, either Good or Evil. And therefore things altogether indifferent, as excluded from both of theſe, and partaking of neither, are not the proper Subject of a true *Reſolution*. And if a Man propoſe a Matter of this Nature to himſelf, about which he is left purely free, and not determin'd one way or other, by any Law of God, or Nature, neither immediately, nor by conſequence; though he purſue his purpoſe never ſo regularly, nor decline ever from it, 'till he brings it to Effect; we may call this Steddineſs, or Conſtancy in him, if we will; and if the Matter will bear it, he deſerves our Praiſe, and perhaps our Admiration; but ſurely we cannot properly either call it, or account it to be, the Vertue of *Reſolution* in him, becauſe 'tis indeed, ſtrictly ſpeaking, no Vertue at all. Which plainly appears from hence, that a Man is never bound in Conſcience, from the Reaſon of the thing it ſelf, or from any Law about it, not to recede from his Purpoſe in a Matter of this Nature, though by a Senſe of his own Honour and Reputation he may be ſo.

This then is the Nature and Notion of a true Religious *Courage* and *Reſolution*, a fixt and immoveable Purpoſe of acting always according to our Conſcience, whatever Temptations may tend to move us from it, or whatever may be the Conſequences of our doing ſo. And how to bring our ſelves to this Strength and Firmneſs of Mind, in the regular Purſuit of our Duty, ſhall be more diſtinctly conſider'd in theſe following Particulars.

Firſt then, That our *Reſolution* may be fix'd and laſting, we are to form it after ſufficient Enquiries, upon calm and deliberate Reaſon; after an intimate and thorow Conviction of the Juſtice and Goodneſs of our Cauſe. And

And therefore, *Secondly*, We are not to make Paſſion, or Prejudice, a Reſpect to Perſons, or Parties, but a due Regard to the Nature and Quality of Things, the Ground and Motive of our *Reſolution.*

And, *Thirdly*, That our *Reſolution* may ſtand in the Day of Trial, 'tis neceſſary, that we not only look to the Goodneſs of our Cauſe, but to our Selves; That we carefully weigh and eſtimate our own Strength; That we ſearch out our own Temper and Inclinations; Conſider wiſely where we are moſt liable to be aſſaulted, and what kind of Temptations may take hold of us ſooneſt; and ſo, by proper Applications beforehand, we are to take care to ſtrengthen what is weak within us, and to guard and ſecure our Vertue by a wiſe Preſumption of our Enemy.

And all this that I have mention'd, muſt we do in an humble Dependence upon the Grace of God, and out of a juſt Senſe of our Need of his Aſſiſtance, without which, when we have done our utmoſt, we are yet *unſtable as Water*, and ſhall never be able to excel to Perfection in any Vertue whatſoever.

And, *Firſt*, That our *Reſolution* may hold out always, we are to form it upon ſufficient Enquiries into the Matter before us, and to take it up on calm and deliberate Reaſon, and after an intimate and thorow Conviction of the Juſtice and Goodneſs of our Cauſe.

For all the Force and Firmneſs a true *Reſolution* has within it at any time, it derives from Reaſon and Conſcience; and it proceeds all along in the Execution of it ſelf, in the Strength and Conſequence of thoſe Arguments on which 'twas built at firſt: A Man *therefore* thinks himſelf bound to purſue any thing with more or leſs Steddineſs and Application, according to the Opinion he has fram'd to himſelf of a greater or leſs Neceſſity in it: And the Grounds and Meaſure of a right Opinion lie for the moſt part retir'd, and out of Sight, in the Nature and Quality of Things, which muſt therefore, by a cloſe and deep Reflection, be laid open to our Minds, in order to leave thoſe Impreſſions there, which may afterwards continue to influence our Practice. *Reſolution* therefore in the Will, when 'tis form'd as it ſhould be, muſt have a ſtrength in it proportionable to the Convictions of our Judgment: 'Tis our Fault and Weakneſs indeed if it have leſs, and we are accountable for it; but more we are ſure it cannot have, as long as it is reaſonable: For when once it comes to run beyond Judgment and Evidence, 'tis off from its proper ground, and, ſo far, is without Reaſon. A Man therefore that ſhall purpoſe any thing to himſelf, without, or beſides, Directions from his Reaſon and Judgment, how ſtiffly ſoever he may ad-

adhere to his own Choice, and whatſoever he undergo in the Proſecution of it, yet ſtill 'tis not really *Reſolution* in him, but *Obſtinacy*: For the proper Notion of *Obſtinacy* lies in this, in a forceable bending our Wills any way, without, or againſt, the Convictions of our Reaſon. And whatever the Nature of the Cauſe it ſelf may happen to be, yet in a Man that ſhall thus blindly purſue it, it makes no Difference at all, as to the Nature and Quality of his Actions: 'Tis Stubbornneſs in him even to propoſe and follow a Right and Vertuous Cauſe: For though there may be never ſo much Reaſon for it really, and in the Nature of the Thing it ſelf, yet this Man is able to give none for it, becauſe he has none; but ſets his Will raſhly to work, without the Information of his Judgment.

The Neceſſity therefore of a ſound and thorow Conſideration, e're we reſolve in any Cauſe, would appear ſufficiently, were it only from hence, that our *Reſolution* might have any Worth and Vertue in it; which it can never have, as I have already prov'd, if we make it in the dark; even although we could be ſure to ſtick to it afterwards: But it is not very likely that we will do ſo, nay 'tis almoſt impoſſible we ſhould. For the Foundation being thus ſhallow, the Superſtructure will be apt to reel and totter upon every Guſt of Temptation. A ſtrong, a preſent Influence of Good or Evil will be apt to turn the Will any way, becauſe there is nothing to ſupport and keep it right to one ſide more than another.

Will a Man, think we, care to turn off his preſent Advantages? Will he put by the warm and vigorous Applications of a mighty Intereſt juſt before his Eyes? when it comes attended with ſuch Variety of Graces, and ſtrikes upon him with all the Force of Art without, aſſiſted with the powerful Inclinations of his own Nature within? Will he be able to give it a Repulſe? Will he have the Heart to ſay, *Get thee hence,* when it thus ſooths and careſſes him? And all this, out of a mere ſtiff and ſullen Humour, becauſe he will, and becauſe he is reſolv'd to ſtick to a former Purpoſe, which he has made, he knows not why? Yet this is the very Caſe of that Man that reſolves to be on the ſide of Truth, which he never examin'd, nor cares to underſtand!

Again, on the other ſide, will this Man have the Face to confront the grim Viſage of Terrors and Sufferings? Will he be able to bear up againſt the Diſcountenance of Power, when it threatens him? When it hangs dark and gloomy over him, and points out to him *below* the Bones, and Carcaſſes of others, that have thus ſtood out, and fallen before him? If he can, 'tis more than can be reaſonably expected from

from him, and more than himſelf can ever juſtify from his own Condition and Circumſtances. For it cannot be deny'd that theſe, I have mention'd, are real Terrors, and ought to move a wiſe Man at any time, when he has no ſtronger Reaſon to oppoſe againſt them; which the Man in the preſent Caſe is ſuppos'd not to have; and therefore how comes he thus to follow his Duty, ſo inconſiſtently with himſelf, and to *commit the Action* of a wiſe Man upon ſuch a *Foundation* of Ignorance and Folly?

But now an Obligation in point of Conſcience, which always ariſes from an impartial Enquiry into the Nature and Conſequences of Things, is ſtronger than all theſe Arguments put together, than even the Terrors of *Death* it ſelf: And therefore will be able to carry a Man through with his Duty, whatever may oppoſe him; and make his *Reſolution* hold out againſt all Importunities of Times and Intereſts.

I need not here make an Application of this general Diſcourſe to our Selves, and our own Caſe at preſent: Every one, that knows any thing of it, is convinc'd of the Juſtice and Firmneſs of our *Cauſe*. And the more he looks into it, the more he will ſtill be ſatisfied, that his Zeal toward it is highly religious and reaſonable; and therefore his *Reſolution* to ſtand by it ought to be perpetual. And here we have reaſon to bleſs the good Providence of God, that thoſe Men have always been, and ſtill are, the beſt Friends of our Church and Conſtitution, that underſtand it beſt, and know the Bottom upon which 'tis founded, and thoſe excellent Advantages with which it is adorn'd. It will ſtand the Teſt of our utmoſt Scrutinies, and does not require a bare and naked Submiſſion to its Doctrine and Diſcipline, but lays it ſelf open to our Examination, and invites and enjoins Men not to accept of it, but upon clear and unconteſted Evidence.

* 'Twas an Objection againſt Primitive Chriſtianity, made by ſome of the worſt Enemies of it, that it render'd all Argument uſeleſs, and ſhut out the Enquiries of Reaſon into its Articles and Doctrines, and requir'd in its Proſelytes a † mere *ſimple* Faith to receive and entertain it. And how do the Fathers of the Church anſwer this? But by the ſame Argument which will ſerve us againſt our Adverſaries; by referring Men to a ſtrict, a cloſe, and impartial Trial of it; by leaving it to their beſt Judgment to conſider it, and then to refuſe, or comply with it, according to the cleareſt Light and Evidence of their own Reaſon. And do not we deſire the very ſame in all thoſe that have the Skill and Abilities to weigh our Cauſe? And we are ſure the Ballance muſt *then* turn on our ſide.

* Μὴ ἐξετάζε ἀλλὰ πίστευσον. Origen. *contra* Celſum, *lib.* 1 *p.* 8, 9. *Edit* Cantab.

† Οἱ ἁπλῶς τῷ πίστει προσερχόμενοι τῆς ἀληθείας βεβαιότατοι εἰσι. Irenæus *lib.* 1. *p.* 29 *Edit.* Oxon.

And

[a] And those that by their Education and Circumstances are not so well able to examine it themselves, let them trust the Resolutions, and depend upon the Judgment of wiser Men in this Case, as they must necessarily do in many other Matters, that are yet of the greatest Moment and highest Consequence to them. And 'twill be a sufficient ground for their pious Zeal and *Resolution*, that they have done their best; God and Man will commend them for it, and they shall not fail of their Reward.

But, *Secondly*, We are not to make Passion, or Prejudice, a Respect to Persons, or Parties, but a due Regard to the Nature and Quality of Things, the Ground and Motive of our *Resolution*, if we design it should be lasting.

[b] For Passion can never hold always, and it is not fit it should; and then whatsoever is built upon it, must necessarily sink and *tumble* with it: And Prejudice, 'tis to be hop'd, in time will be remov'd, and then what becomes of a *Resolution* that depends upon it? The truth is, 'tis great pity that both, or either of these mean Qualities should ever *seem* to be the Parent of so noble an Offspring. For that they can never *really* be so, is beyond all question, and will presently appear, if we consider it. A bold and haughty Humour indeed, whetted by Opposition, very often puts on the Face of *Courage* and *Resolution*; but 'tis sure, there is nothing at a greater Distance from it, and 'twill be found so, whenever there is Occasion to prove it. Because those very Arguments, that are most powerful in themselves, and most proper to try the Temper and Complection of our *Courage*, do, by a sort of natural Efficacy, tend to remove, or rebate, the Force and Edge of our Passion and Prejudice, which yet are here suppos'd to be the only Ground and Foundation of our *Courage*. And when the same Engines are busily employ'd, at the same time, to batter the Edifice it self, and to undermine the Foundation upon which it stands, he that does not see what is like to be the Issue, does not deserve to be inform'd.

Thus, for Instance, If a fond and foolish Affection to any Cause, or Party, be the only fundamental Principle of our Zeal towards it, the proper and usual Course in such a Case as this, is to counter-

[a] Εἰ δ' ἀμήχανον, τῷ μὲν διὰ τὰς τῆ βίᾳ ἀνάγκας, τῷ δὲ ᾗ διὰ τὸ ἀσθενῶν ἀδύνατον, σφόδρα ὀλίγων ἔτι ἃ λέγει ἀξίων, &c. Orig. *contra* Cels. *ibid.*

[b] Εἰσὶ δ' αὖ ἄλλοι δοκοῦντες ἀνδρεῖοι εἶναι διὰ τὰ πάθη· οἷον οἱ ὀργίλοι, ἢ οἱ ἀνθρασύζονλες· διὸ δὴ τίλος φασίον ἀνδρεῖοι εἶναι· ἐὰν γὰρ αὐξηθῇ τὸ πάθος ἀφαιρεθῇ, ἀνίλε ἐσλὶν ἀνδρεῖοι. Aristot. *Mag. Mor. lib.* 1. *cap.* 21.

mine

mine the Force of this ſoft Paſſion, by the Methods of a contrary Repreſentation: 'Tis only to ſour the Blood a little, by laying Terrors before the Fancy; and to damp the Jollity, and reduce the extravagant Gaiety, of the Spirits. For Terrors and Fondneſs, with Regard to the ſame thing, cannot dwell long together in the ſame Neighbourhood; and therefore the one is a moſt proper and effectual Remedy for the other. Again, if Anger or Diſ-affection to *one* Cauſe, or Body of Men, be the Ground of our Zeal and *Reſolution* for *another*, here muſt be quite different Meaſures taken by him that ſhall attempt it: Affable and courteous Applications, Inſinuations of Favour, and apt Addreſſes are here to be made uſe of by Men, in order to ſoften the Rigour of the Paſſion, 'till it comes to bend and ply to their Deſigns. For, though Anger be a [a] *ſtubborn* Paſſion, yet *a ſoft* Pr. 25. 15. *Tongue*, we know, is able to *break* it, to take down the Rage and Swelling of it, and to overcome its utmoſt Violence, by a gentle Management. So that we ſee, 'tis only to play one Paſſion againſt another, and to apply to each by proper Movements, and you may turn and manage a Man, that has nothing elſe but Paſſion in his Cauſe to truſt to, which way you will.

And this the great Maſters of human Life, the Men of *Buſineſs* and *Knowledge* of the World, are very ſenſible of; and therein indeed lies the Advantage which they think they have above other Men. They have nicely obſerv'd the Turns, and Variety of Windings in human Nature, and imagine they can take hold of a Man, let him be never ſo ſlippery: And though perhaps they may not underſtand the Philoſophy of the Paſſions ſo well as *Scholars*, nor be able to diſcourſe finely upon the Seat and Complection of them, of the Springs from whence they riſe, and of the Ways in which they *ſhould* move and act *regularly*; Yet how they *will* move and act in common Life, theſe Men know better than we can tell them; and are found too hard for us many times, though we ſtand prepar'd and girt with the whole *Panoply* of our Learning.

'Tis neceſſary therefore, if theſe Men at any time ſhould have more Skill than Honeſty, (which not ſeldom happens) when they attempt to beat us off our Ground in a good Cauſe, that we ſhould have ſome other Security to guard us, beſides what theſe Men are ſo well acquainted with; even the *Armour* and Defence of a *good Conſcience in the ſight of God*; a Mind well form'd and ſettled upon Principles of

[a] Ἦ οὐκ ἐννενόηκας ὡς ἄμαχόν τε καὶ ἀνίκητον θυμὸς; ἔφη πᾶσα πρὸς πάντα φοβὸς τε καὶ ἀήττητος. Plato, *Polit. lib.* 2. Ἀήττητον γὰρ ὁ θυμός. Ariſtot. *Eudem. lib.* 3. *cap.* 1.

Religion and Reaſon, and under lively Convictions of its Duty. For, theſe are ſuch kind of Arguments, as theſe Men know not how to deal with; they lie quite out of their way, beyond the Reach of all their *Policy, Cunning*, and *Craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* But a Man of mere Heat and Paſſion in his Cauſe theſe Men deſpiſe; and know that, when he has run his Lengths, they ſhall have him come about at laſt, and may take him as they pleaſe. We ſee then plainly how our Paſſions are liable to betray us, and therefore there is no ſafe truſting them with our *Reſolution.* For this we may depend upon for certain, that as much of Paſſion, of what kind ſoever, as goes into the Frame and Conſtitution of our *Courage* at firſt, ſo much more will there be left of Lameneſs and Imperfection in it, when this Paſſion is once remov'd; and how this may be done we have ſeen already, and Men of Artifice and Cunning know very well how to do it.

Eph. 4. 14.

Thirdly, That our *Reſolution* may ſtand in the Day of Trial, 'tis neceſſary, that we not only look to the Goodneſs of our Cauſe, but to our ſelves; that we carefully weigh and eſtimate our own Strength; that we ſearch out our own Temper and Inclinations, and conſider wiſely where we are moſt liable to be aſſaulted, and what kind of Temptations may take with us ſooneſt; and ſo by proper Applications before-hand, we are to take care and ſtrengthen what is weak within us, and to guard and ſecure our Vertue, by a wiſe Preſumption of our Enemy.

'Tis our Saviour's own way of Arguing, and Advice to as many as would come into his Religion, not only to look upon the bright ſide of it, and to have their Thoughts and Hearts wholly taken up, and intent upon contemplating the glorious Propoſals and Priviledges of his Goſpel; though theſe were infinitely greater than any other: But that Men would do well likewiſe to conſider, on the other hand, what they muſt reſolve to part with, or ſubmit to, in Compliance with their Duty; How much of their preſent Satisfaction they muſt often forego, and what ſevere Diſpenſations many times they would be bound to accept, in Purſuance of his Religion, in Contradiction to the very Grain of their Natures, their ſtrongeſt, and moſt deeply rooted Deſires. For otherwiſe, if the former Advantages were only attended to, and a Man would be ſure to meet with the latter Evils in the Courſe of his Obedience, this would be a terrible Surprize to him, apt to make him ſtart and fly from his Purpoſe, and renounce his Duty, to ſecure his preſent Intereſt and Pleaſure. And therefore a Man ſhould ſit down calmly, and debate with himſelf the Arguments, not only for, but againſt, his preſent Purpoſe; wiſely compute

pute the Measure of his own Strength, and that of his Enemy; and then proceed, or retreat in time, according to the best Judgment he could make of his own Temper and Condition: Otherwise he would by no means be fit to engage, or persist, in a Design of such a Nature and Consequence as *that: If any man come to me*, says our Blessed Lord, *and hate not his father, or his mother, and wife, and children, and* Lu. 14. 26. *brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple;* that is, unless he be so coolly and indifferently affected towards all these things, as to be ready to part with them all, whenever they come to stand in Competition with his Duty. *And whosoever does* Ver. 27. *not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.* And then he goes on, and illustrates his Argument by this just and lively Resemblance, *What King going to make war against another King, sitteth not down first, and consulteth, whether he be able with ten thou-* V. 31, 2, 3. *sand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand; or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.*

And what our Blessed Saviour here pronounces, of our taking upon us the Profession of Christianity in general, will hold as true of any particular point of Duty, that comes to be the Matter of our *Resolution.* Unless we prudently cast up with our selves beforehand, what we may gain, or lose by it, either by quitting, or retaining it; and take care to ballance the one against the other, to see which way the Scale will turn in point of Reason, it will be impossible, that either we our selves, or any Body else for us, should lay any great Stress and Dependence upon our *Resolution.* For a good Cause is quite a different thing, when we look upon it in *Idea*, and consider it abstractedly, stript naked of all disadvantageous, and evil Appendages; and when we come actually to *feel* the *Weight* of it, and to find it beset with *Thorns*, and Perplexities on every side: we shall *then* have quite different Thoughts about us, quite different Motions and Turnings in our Souls, upon this Occasion; and 'twill put us into an Agony to think, how we shall get through these things, unless we have taken care some time before to enure our Minds to the Apprehension of them.

Our Business therefore is *now*, while we have Time and Leisure before us, e're the *evil days come*, when we can no longer consult, but must execute our *Resolution*, now, by *quick* and *lively* Representations upon our Minds, to put our selves sometimes into the Posture, and Condition of suffering Men; to work up our Passions and Affections, if we can, somewhat to the same Pitch and Height,

and to give them a turn and ply like that they will have, when these things come actually to lie before them. And 'tis certain if we do this, we shall be no Losers by it; For we shall not by this means, as some would fear, *anticipate* and *prevent* the Evil of our Sufferings, (because we do not here consider 'em as certain, but as probable) nor shall we make them more troublesome than they need to be, by antedating them; but we shall abate the *Edge*, and *Smart* of them when they come, and so be able to act consistently with our best Reason, and Judgment, in the midst of all the Tumult and Hurry of our Passions.

But there is one thing, which I had almost forgot, That 'tis not only the Temptation of Evils and Sufferings, against which we ought to prepare, and arm our selves, in the Defence, and Support of a good Cause; but there is another very powerful one, that, in some Constitutions is found to prevail more effectually than the former Terrors; by being a *Bait* to *draw* and allure the Minds of Men to a Compliance, where the former could not *drive* them. And 'tis the Temptation of Favours and Advantages, which a Man may certainly, or very probably, procure to himself, by *going over* from his *Duty*. This indeed is a very dangerous, and powerful Temptation in it self, and our *Enemies* know how to apply it to all Advantage, and 'tis found very often more successful than the other. For some Tempers, that will bear up against Trouble and Vexation, will yet bend to Pleasure: *Opposition* will sometimes make a Man resolute, when *fair* and *soft* Applications to him would break his Force: A *rough* and *boisterous Storm* will put a Man upon his Guard, make him wrap himself close, and gird his Defence about him: When the gentle Insinuations of Heat, the kinder Influences of *Favour* descending on him, may prevail with him, by Degrees, to lay himself open to take any Impressions, and to be form'd and * soften'd to any Compliances whatsoever.

Not, that I think it a thing unlawful in it self, for a Man to take, and use, the Favours of ill Men, whatsoever Design they may have in giving them: For they *may* prove happy Advantages to Vertue, and noble Occasions of commending our Integrity before God, and all the World. But if a Man *suspect* his own Strength at all, if through the Grace of God, and his Experience of himself, he dares not *trust* his own *Resolution*, let him *fly* those Advantages that may

* —*Ἡ ᾗ πρὸς πόθεν ᾖ, ᾗ ἡδονὰς, ᾗ πόνους δεινὰς θωπείας κολακικὰς, αἱ ᾗ τῶν σμικρῶν διαφόρων ἄντικρυς εἶναι τοῦ θυμὸς μαλθάσσουσι, κηρὸν ποιοῦσι πρὸς ταῦτα ξύμπαντα.* Plato *de Leg. lib. primo.*

chance

chance to *ruine* him; *ſhake his Hands* from the Gifts of theſe Men, as from *Bribes*, ſo many dangerous Occaſions that come to rob him of his Honour and Honeſty.

And, indeed, 'tis enough to make a Man a little afraid of himſelf, to ſee the Fate of others, that have by this means fallen before him: Men, that appear'd once to have as much Integrity, and Zeal in a good Cauſe, as any; That ſpoke as Bravely, and acted in Defence of it, and perhaps *wrote* for it; and whom all Men thought, as they verily might themſelves, as far from ever relinquiſhing it: Yet, *How* have theſe Men, whom Terrors could never have mov'd, yielded at laſt to Courtſhip! The *Jaw-bones of theſe Lions, How* have we ſeen them *fall away like water*, till they could not *ſpeak*! Pſ. 58. 6. Theſe noble Champions, *How* have they been foil'd in a † ſlippery place of Preferment! Till they could no longer *act* (as all Men had reaſon to expect they would always) as became brave Men, in Correſpondence with their former Character, and thoſe Aſſurances they had given the World! But they have *tamely*, and *quietly* ſurrender'd themſelves up, quite *drain'd* and *diſpirited* of their ancient Zeal and Vigour, to the *ſway* and *management* of thoſe, by whom they were Advanc'd.

† —*per lubrica ſurgens.* Vir. Æn. 5.

'Tis enough therefore to make us a little jealous of our ſelves, and to ſuſpect the Force of the Arguments in general, from the Succeſs we find they have had upon others, perhaps once as ſtout as we may now think our ſelves. And therefore 'tis not ſafe for us to enter the Liſts, and to put our ſelves againſt them, till we have ſurvey'd our ſelves well, and through God's Aſſiſtance dare truſt the Strength of our Arms approv'd every way, by Art, as well as Nature: For, if we truſt only to the natural Goodneſs of our Temper and Conſtitution in this Caſe, it may perhaps deceive us: In as much as this kind of Arguments does more *often* indeed, and more *effectually* prevail upon the *beſt* Natures; upon thoſe, that have not uſually the *hardineſs* to ſuſpect a *deſign*, where they receive a *kindneſs*. A Man had need of a little *roughneſs*, and even *ſurlineſs* in his Complection, to have his Breaſt guarded with *Braſs and Iron*, to keep out the Inſinuations of * Flattery: 'Tis a Poiſon that works ſo ſtrongly upon our Self-love, that we take it in greedily, and ſwallow it without Suſpicion, and will not be perſwaded we are at all Sick by it, till every Body elſe ſees we are paſt Recovery.

* Οἷον, πάλαι, δεινῷ θηρίῳ, καὶ βαθείᾳ μεγάλῃ, ὅμως ἐπήμυξεν ἡ φύσις ἡδονήν τινα ἐκ ἄμυσιν. Plato *in* Phædro.

So

So that, if we would have our *Resolution* prevail above all these numerous and mighty Temptations, it must be our Care to know our selves well; to place Guards and Fences about our Hearts; to prop up and support what is weak, and insufficient within us; And to secure all the *avenues* of our Souls that lie open, and are liable to be assaulted any way, either by *Storm*, or by more gentle *Approaches*. And if we do this carefully *now*, 'tis sure we shall find Occasion to applaud our selves *hereafter*; we shall find in the Day of Trial we have acted wisely, and that our *Courage*, like a *true Friend*, will *then* stand by us, *when* we have most need of its Assistance. Which brings me to

The *Second* Thing I propos'd to observe from my Text, That Times of Danger and Difficulty, when the Cause of Truth is like to suffer, and stands in need of a Support, are the proper Season, wherein we are to express our *Resolution*, and that, if it then fail, it was never real, and well grounded; never well prepar'd, and establish'd, according to the Directions I have already given.

For the proper Perfections of every Thing is to attain its end; and if our *Resolution* fall short of this, whatever we may pretend, *Wise Men* will easily see through it, and be sure to lay the Fault, where it ought to be, in its *proper* Place. If we say, we design'd always well, but were over-born by the Violence of a present Temptation to leave our Purpose; What do we? But really own, in the Nature of the thing it self, and in the true Meaning of our own Excuse, that our Purpose was never *perfect*, as it should have been, at first, and but half form'd in the *Beginning*. † For we ought to have fore-seen our Danger, if we had been truly Valiant; the very Notion of *Resolution* and Fortitude implying, and requiring a sufficient Apprehension of the Evils we may chance to suffer in the Prosecution of it: But the Man, that does not at all consider into what Consequences he runs himself by his Designs, we may term him *Rash*, but not *Resolute*; * *Bold*, but not *Courageous*. To satisfy the World therefore, that ever we resolv'd and design'd well, let us act so, when ever the Times, and State of Affairs demand it of us.

† Οἱ γὰρ ἄπειροι μᾶλλον ἐκπλήττονται ὑ φοβοῦνται διὰ τὴν ἀπειρίαν· ὀλίγῳ γὰρ πάντες φοβερώτεροι ἀνδρείοις. Arist. *Mag. Mor. lib.* 1. *cap.* 21.

† Οὐ γάρ τι ὦ Λάχης ἔγωγε ἀνδρεῖα καλῶ ἅπασαν θυσίαν, ἔστι γὰρ ἄλλο ἄλλῃ τὸ καλῶς ἔχον ἐν ἀνάγκαις μὴ φοβεῖσθαι, ἀλλ' ἄφοβον καὶ μωρόν. Plato *in* Lachete.

* Ταῦτα δὴ σὺ καλεῖς ἀνδρεῖα, καὶ οἱ πολλοὶ, ἐγὼ θερμὰ καλῶ· ἀνδρεῖα δὲ τὰ φρόνιμα. Plato *ibid.*

But

But *here*, when we mention the Danger and Difficulty of Times, ſhould we do this with a particular Reference, and Direction to our *own*, perhaps we might offend: Some Men would, in their great Gravity, tell us, that ſurely we are much to blame for buſying our ſelves about ſuch Things as theſe, and which do not belong to us; and perhaps, by a wrong Application, the quote the Words of *Solomon* upon this Purpoſe: '*Say not thou, what is the cauſe that the former days were better than theſe? for thou doſt not enquire wiſely concerning this.* We are out of Humour, they ſay, and want *Preferment*, and that makes us *complain* of the Times; and 'tis our *Frowardneſs*, and *Folly* that we do ſo. 'Tis not ſome Men's Wiſdom, we grant it, to Complain of any, becauſe 'tis their *Intereſt* to Comply with *all*. But how do we not *wiſely* to *complain*, if we have *Reaſon* for it? And whether we have not Reaſon ſufficient in *theſe evil Days*, I appeal to all Men, beſides our Enemies, all the *wiſe* Men of the Nation, and the common Senſe of *honeſt* Men. Eccleſ. 7. 10

What *Solomon* then deſign'd by theſe Words, * if they muſt at all relate to *Politicks*, was this, that we ſhould not Complain without Reaſon; not to be querulous, and uneaſy under Government, when the Advantages of the Times, in which we live, are great, and the Inconveniences but little and common, ſuch as are almoſt neceſſary, and can hardly be avoided at any time: For that this is indeed unreaſonable, and an Argument of a reſtleſs and ſeditious Spirit; But, ſurely, *Solomon* could never intend, by theſe Words, to exclude a juſt, and reaſonable Complaint of the Times, unleſs we'll make his *Wiſdom* contradict the Rules of *common Senſe* and *Prudence*. For it may be our Duty to *complain*, and to appeal againſt the Corruptions of the World, and of theſe *Men* more *eſpecially*, in order to prevent the farther Growth of Evil.

* *For there is no Neceſſity the ſhould: See* Pool's Synop ſis *on this Place*

And then as for *Preferment*, whatever we may think of *it*, or they of *us*; we hope however, no Propoſals, or Expectations of *Preferment* will take us off from our *Honour*, and *Conſcience*; how little ſoever ſome Men may ſeem to have, that do enjoy it. But *ſurely* one would have thought theſe *wiſe Men* had known the way to *Preferment* in theſe Days, a little better; and that 'tis not to *complain* (as I hinted before) but to *comply*: Can they think us then ſo fooliſh, that we would take ſo very ungracious a Method to diſappoint our ſelves of it, as this? Upon theſe Grounds then we may hope for theſe good Men's Excuſe, if we do *complain* a little; and they may *well bear with us*, ſince they make their own Advantage ſo much by *that*, which is the Ground of our *Complaint*.

But

But let them *know*, that 'tis not *Intereſt*, and *Preferment*, but *Religion* and *Conſcience*, that oblige us to behave our ſelves *thus;* and to ſtand up in *Defence* of our *Holy Church*, and *Conſtitution*, againſt the ill Effects of their Principles, and Practice. Were it only our own Eaſe, and Advantage we conſulted, we could fairly ſit ſtill as well as others; and though with leſs Satisfaction to our own Conſciences, yet, we know, with the *better Opinion* of theſe Men: Or, we could run in with the *Stream* of the Times, and be carried *ſmoothly* down by it, till we ſhould be thrown, one time or other, upon a Condition, ſurely more Reconcileable with our *Eaſe* at leaſt, than theſe *weariſome Conteſts* are: But we *believe*, and *therefore* we *ſpeak:* We are verily perſwaded in our Selves, that our Church, and Holy Religion are the beſt conſtituted, to all Purpoſes of true Piety, of any in the World; moſt agreeable to the Purity of Chriſt, and the beſt Patterns of the primitive Ages; and 'tis *this* that makes us ſo much concern'd, and ſo very apprehenſive of Danger, from the Deſigns of ill Men, that plainly appear to threaten them. And God forbid their Malice ſhould out-live our Zeal, or that we ſhould ever approve, or not proteſt againſt, thoſe Methods, that are every Day taken to undermine our Peace!

And ſince I am led ſo near to it, I ſhall crave leave, in this *Venerable Audience*, to take off the Malignity of an *Ill-natur'd Reflection*, that has been made upon us of this Body more particularly, by a ſort of Men, that, by other Inſtances, as well as this, appear to have no great Kindneſs for our *Profeſſion* in general. 'We are a *fond* and *humorous* People, they ſay, of *narrow* and *contracted* Spirits; *quickly* 'pleas'd, and *eaſily offended:* We are preſently fluſh'd with a little 'Proſpect of Advantage in the Government; and our Diſcourſe, and 'our Expectations run high; But if every thing be not carried ex-'actly to our Humour, we turn *ſullen* immediately, and *mutinous;* 'and don't ſtick to *quarrel* at the *Government*, and cenſure its Pro-'ceedings. It may be hop'd, that thoſe that know us better, have entertain'd no ſuch diſadvantageous Opinion of us, nor found *amongſt us* any ſuch *Behaviour:* As we our ſelves are not ſenſible of any ſuch, and are ſure, if there be, 'tis what by the Doctrines, and Principles of our *own Church* (which yet we may be ſuppos'd to know and believe, as much as others) we muſt for ever diſcountenance and diſapprove. But if there ſhould chance to have been ſuch at any Time; we hope only for *common Candour*, and *Charity* from the World, in this Caſe, and that the Misbehaviour, and Imprudence of a *few*, will not be charg'd upon our *whole* Body; when what they do is againſt the *general* Conſent.

As

As for our being ſo quickly touch'd with Good or Evil, that affects our Church, and our being ſo ſoon rais'd, or ſunk upon it; 'tis not from our own particular Hopes, or Fears of finding our own Account in it, or not; but 'tis from an exquiſite and lively Senſe we have of the common Intereſt of Religion, above what may be well preſum'd in the Generality of Men, whoſe Buſineſs lies more involv'd in ſecular Affairs. 'Tis ours chiefly to have our Eyes always awake, and open for the Preſervation of our excellent Religion; and therefore we are ſo very apprehenſive of all Occurrences that concern it; becauſe he that touches *that*, *touches the Apple of our Eye*, the moſt ſenſible, and tender part about us.

But as for what theſe Men ſay of our *Quarrelling* at, and *Cenſuring*, the Government, we anſwer; if they mean by the *Government*, all thoſe that are entruſted with any Share of the Adminiſtration, we may hope in this Caſe to be excus'd, as well as the reſt of the World, if we do not think our ſelves bound in *Honour* and *Conſcience* to *approve* what every one of them ſhall propoſe and execute: though for their Office ſake, and for our Conſcience ſake, we are, and ought to be, tender of their Character.

But if they mean by the *Government*, Her *Majeſty's ſacred Perſon*; Far be their Accuſation from us! Let it be turn'd againſt *Her* Enemies, and thoſe that hate *us*! May *Her Name* and *Perſon* be for ever highly honour'd amongſt us! Is it poſſible *She* ſhould ever be the Mark of our Diſlike, or our Reflection? *She* that was the only Stay of our Hopes in the worſt of Times, and our main Dependence, and Expectation in theſe: Under *whoſe ſhadow we* always *ſaid* we *ſhould have reſt*; and ſhall be ſure to find it once, howſoever the preſent Intricacy, and Perplexity of Affairs may diſturb Her Reign. For ſurely, that native Goodneſs and Excellency of Temper, improv'd upon the beſt Principles and Education; That firm Zeal for the Honour of God and Religion, expreſs'd ſo often, by Her Suffering, and Acting for it: Thoſe many ſerious, and affectionate Profeſſions of Her Tenderneſs to this Church, and Her declar'd Reſolutions to ſupport, and encourage the beſt Members of it, can never be *long* without the moſt glorious and happy Fruits: *In time* they muſt break through all thoſe Diſadvantages that *ſurround*, and *attend* Her at *preſent*, and diſcover themſelves, to the Triumph, and Glory of our Church, and Holy Religion, to the Diſappointment of our Enemies Deſigns, and to the Confuſion of their Faces. However, if the *Church of England* muſt always wear the proper Badge of Her *Bleſſed Saviour*; be always ſuffering, always conflicting with Her Enemies; Let Her ſtill be for ever Untainted in Her Loyalty; Let

us cut off this Occaſion of boaſting from our Enemies, who *wait* for our *Halting*, and would be glad to ſpread ſome of their *own* Shame upon *us*; Let us not be remov'd from our *Principles*, by any Changes in our *Condition*; Let *us hold faſt our Integrity as long as we live*, and 'twill be our Glory after Death.

We know then of no Reflection made upon Her Majeſty's Government by *us*: if there be any, 'tis what *theſe Men themſelves* have made, who can have the Impudence to give out, or even ſuppoſe, ſo very bad a Cauſe, as their own, to be countenanc'd by Her Favour and Authority.

When 'tis *once* come to this, Is it not Time for us to awake, and begin to beſtir our ſelves? Can we think our ſelves *ſecure*, whilſt theſe Men are ſo *active*? 'Tis a ſign they draw pretty near their *Point*, when their *Motion grows* ſo *violent*. And if, upon the late *inſolent Demeanour* of theſe Men, our *Fears* begin to riſe a little, can they blame us? when both *they*, and *we* know Nothing but our very *Ruine* will give them an entire Satisfaction.

If *Kindneſs* would do them any Good, if 'twould make them the *better Men*, or the *better Subjects*, we ſhould not be ſo much concern'd about it? But when the *Snake*, from being cheriſh'd, only gathers Life, and Strength to hiſs, and ſting the more; when they become only the more *Enrag'd*, and *Extravagant*, and *Mad*, under the Senſe of a *preſent* Advantage, or within the Proſpect of a *future*, Are theſe Men fit to be *encourag'd*? They may Complement and Addreſs the Government, under which they live, 'tis true, for any Favours, which they either have, or falſely preſume themſelves to have, from it; But let not the *Government* ever think it ſelf the more ſecure for this, any longer, than 'tis not in theſe Men's Power to overturn it; nor, when it is, muſt any *Prince* upon the *Throne* of *England* expect a kinder Treatment from them, than the *Beſt* of *Kings* has met with.

This they perhaps may ſay is *Railing*, the *Over-flowings* of our *Gall*, and *Bitterneſs* of *Spirit*; no more than what they might expect to hear from Men of our *Character*, aud eſpecially in this *Place*. It may be ſo, But is it not true? Do we charge them falſly in this point? Have we not ſeen all this exemplified in former Experience? And do we not find things tend to the very ſame at preſent? *How** did they deal with that *merciful* Prince, King *Charles* the Firſt! *How* did they multiply their inſolent Demands upon him, one after another, till they had extorted from him, and driven him out of

* *See this ſufficiently made out, once for all, from their Proceedings with the King in the Treaty in the* Iſle *of* Wight. *Ld.* Clarendon, *3d Part, Book* XI. *Page* 160, &c.

all,

all, that he could poſſibly grant, even all, that he had, but his God and his Conſcience! And theſe he muſt have parted with too, if he would have gone any farther with them: And were they ever the more pleas'd with him, ever the more obedient to him for all this? Were they ever ſatisfied till they had his very *Life* and *Blood*? May that Day's Action never be forgotten! Never be blotted out of the *Records* of Time, what ever ſome Men may deſire! May it always be remember'd, to the Shame, and everlaſting Reproach of theſe Men! And to teach us and our *Poſterity*, the *Children of the Generations to come*, what we muſt expect *hereafter*, if ever the Juſtice of God, for the Sins of this Nation, ſhould ſuffer the Hand of theſe Men to prevail again.

How much we owe for our preſent Security from the Deſigns of theſe ill Men, to the *Courage* and *Reſolution* of our brave *Engliſh Gentlemen*, we can only think in Silence. 'Tis not in our Power, by all the *Eloquence*, this *ancient Seat* of *Learning* abounds with, to make You an Acknowledgment equal to the Zeal and Induſtry You have *more eſpecially* ſhewn of *late*, towards the Defence and Preſervation of this excellent Church, and Conſtitution, againſt *Your* Enemies, and *Ours*. May God and Your own Honour and Conſcience be Your Reward! May You live to ſee the Fruits of Your own *brave* Actions, and *generous* Endeavours! May the Church and State always flouriſh as You deſire! May the *bleſſings of peace and proſperity reſt upon your heads!* while Your *enemies are cloth'd with ſhame and confuſion*, and while *all thoſe that have evil will at Zion, become as graſs wither'd afore it be grown up*; all their Deſigns *blaſted*, and *fruitleſs*; and themſelves the *Scorn* and *Contempt* of the *preſent*, and the *Abhorrence* of *future* Generations. Pſal. 129. 5, 6.

I ſhall *now* go on to conſider Perſons of a very different Character from theſe *noble Patriots*; and ſhall endeavour,

Thirdly, To examine, and anſwer, the Excuſes Men may poſſibly make, and have uſually done ſo, for *deſerting*, or not *defending* a good Cauſe, when 'tis certainly their *Duty*, and within their *Power* to encourage it.

And here, *Firſt*, ſome Men perhaps may think it enough to ſay for themſelves, after all their ſhifting, and changing ſides, and leaving a good Cauſe, and their old Friends, that they do it upon good Reaſon, and better Informations? 'That they were once in-'deed miſtaken, as many an *honeſt* Man may be, and acted then in 'Purſuance of that Miſtake: but *ſince*, they have with more Care 'examin'd the Matter, and are now come to be of a different Opinion, 'and have accordingly taken up other Reſolutions; and hope all the

'World will excuſe them for it, ſince, they aſſure us, they have 'done nothing in this Caſe, but upon very weighty, and ſufficient 'Arguments.

What kind of Arguments theſe *Gentlemen* may poſſibly have met with, we cannot ſo well tell, but, we know, ſome are very *enlightening*. And perhaps it may not be ſo very difficult to trace the Steps, and Methods of their *Converſion*, if we look a little nearer into the Change of their *Condition*. However, do they think their own *bare Word* enough for us to depend upon in this Caſe, that they have good Reaſon for their *Change?* when all the *wiſe* and *honeſt* Men in the World are ſure themſelves *have*, and are every Day able to give, ſuch innumerable Reaſons to the contrary! 'Tis true, a Man may be allow'd to change his Opinion at any time, upon *good Reaſon;* and no length of Days, no Multitudes, nor Authority of Men ought to preſcribe againſt the Truth. But, ſurely, when a Man goes off from the general and concurrent Opinion of Men as *wiſe*, or, as he may modeſtly preſume, *ſomething wiſer* than himſelf, there is ſo much Reſpect and Reverence due to the common Senſe of Men, as that he ſhould endeavour to give the World ſome reaſonable Satisfaction for it. Yet we can inſtance in ſome Men, and thoſe no very inconſiderable ones, that, we are ſure by comparing their *former Writings*, and their *preſent Practice*, have, within the compaſs of a few Years, very much alter'd their Opinions. But they have never done us the *Favour* and *Civility* all this while, to let us know, upon what Grounds; and, if we ask it of them at any time, we receive indeed *Paſſion* enough, but no *Reaſon*, for our Anſwer. They are diſpleas'd, and angry with us, that we will not believe, and act as they do, when they won't let us know how they *could* ever come to do ſo *themſelves*, and we can't imagine how any *wiſe* or *good* Men ever *ſhould*.

If a Man then will be *changing* at any time *from* a *Cauſe* that has, at leaſt, the higheſt *Preſumption* of Truth on its ſide, and that, for a long Courſe of Time, has carry'd off the Approbation, and Judgment of the greater Part, and thoſe the wiſeſt Men, *to another*, That for the *main*, is only cried up in the *Aſſembly of Fools*, applauded by the Suffrages of vain and idle, weak and vicious Men; If he deſigns to eſcape the Shame and Cenſure of the World in this Caſe, let him be able and ready to ſhew his Reaſons for his Change, and we will hear them. But merely for him to ſay, that he has ſuch Reaſons to himſelf, is not ſufficient; *eſpecially* at a *time*, when he cannot but know, his Veracity lies juſtly under a ſtrong Suſpicion, upon the account of his very *Change*. We would fain then know, what theſe Men have to ſay *for themſelves*, and *againſt* our *Cauſe* at preſent; If they

they have any *Arguments*, let them produce them; Let them bring out their *ſtrong Reaſons*, that we may *know* them; And if we cannot chuſe out a Man amongſt us that ſhall be able to anſwer and overcome them, we will promiſe to go over, and ſerve their Cauſe; but if we *can*, and we don't queſtion it, we expect, and that *juſtly*, they ſhould return to us: Otherwiſe, let them be contented to take the Conſequence, as to what the World will be apt to ſay, or think of them upon this account; and that, upon very good Reaſon, much better, we may ſuppoſe, than any they have to plead for themſelves.

This then is our Reply to thoſe Men that have quite *deſerted* us; *gone off totally* from us; upon *Principles*, as they pretend, but really becauſe *they were never of us: for if they had been* truly *of us, they would, no doubt, have continued with us.* 1 Jo. 2. 19.

But there are others, *Secondly*, That, though they do quite *fall off*, and utterly *renounce* a good Cauſe, yet think it leſs neceſſary to *ſtir* much in it, becauſe they are not aware, *they ſay*, the Truth is in ſo much Danger, as we would ſeem to make it.

How long will it be e're theſe Men come to *awake* and *apprehend* how *near* they are *undone*! If we are *ſafe*, as theſe Men would fain perſwade us, and our worſt Enemies would have us believe *at any Purchaſe*; What means then all this Noiſe and Stir of late to inſult us? All thoſe indirect, and illegal Methods to oppoſe, and undermine us? Thoſe many villanous Practices to *ſerve* a *Cauſe*, which no Pretence can ever juſtify, nor any Law of God or Man excuſe? He that does not ſee all this, and plainly perceive to what it tends, is *willingly ignorant*, and may juſtly be ſuſpected of a Party with our Enemies, whoſe Deſigns he would endeavour thus to *ſcreen* from our Suſpicion: Or a fatal Slumber has ſeiz'd his Spirits, and he ſleeps upon the *Beach*, till a *Wave* roll in upon him, and take him away for ever.

I ſhall not enter any farther into Particulars, nor will your Patience bear it; But, ſurely our Caſe at preſent is *ſuch*, that if there was *ever* a Time, that call'd for our Zeal and Activity, 'tis *now*; and we are falſe to our *God*, to our own *Conſcience*, and to our excellent *Conſtitution*, if we *don't* employ our *utmoſt*; if we don't think our ſelves concern'd to avoid a *Ruine* that *threatens* us at our *very Doors*, and is ready to *come in* at our *Windows*. Let *us make* our *enemies themſelves our judges* in this Caſe: Would they, think we, appear ſo very much exalted? Would they rejoyce, and triumph at *this rate*; if they did not take themſelves to have a *great* Advantage over us? And did not *yet* expect a *greater*? And can they have *any* long, without our *Ruine*? If *we* don't know when 'tis time for Jer. 9. 21.

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Virgil. de Paſtoro, Æn. 5. us to *ariſe*, and take care of our ſelves, *they* know how to make uſe of our *Supineneſs*; and will ſhake the *Rod* of *Slumber* over our Heads, till the *Ship*, in which all our Hopes, and Happineſs are *embarqu'd*, *crack* under us; till the Frame of our Conſtitution *diſſolve*, and we are plung'd in irrecoverable Ruine.

'But we have Men of *tender*, and *charitable* Spirits amongſt us, '(as they would be thought) Men of ſweet, gentle, and pacific 'Natures! That can't bear ſo much as a *juſt*, and *ſevere* Reflection, Mat. 3. 8. 'though it be upon a *generation of vipers*, a *Race* of *Villains*! And 12. 34. 'though it be never ſo neceſſary to make us *aware* of them, and 23. 33. '*take care*, they don't *ſtab* us to the Heart.

Luk. 3. 7. In *God's Name*, does *not Charity begin at home*? Are we bound to be *charitable* to our *Deſtruction*? Muſt we never *think* Men can have ill Deſigns upon us, till we are *ruin'd* by them? Is there any ſuch *Charity* due to a vicious, lewd, profligate, factious Combination of Men? That appear to have no other Concern, what *becomes* of our *Government*, than to make their own baſe Ends by it: nor about Religion, any farther, than as 'twill ſerve, as an *Engine* of their own Deſigns; and, in the mean time, by the Malignity of their own vile Example, endeavour to break the very *Heart* and *Power* of it, and, as much as they can, to *eraſe* the very Notions of it out of the Minds of Men, by their *looſe* practiſing, or *countenancing* Hypocriſy? What Charity can be due to ſuch Men as theſe, unleſs it be to oppoſe them as much as *poſſibly* we are able, and to hinder 'em from doing all the *Miſchief* they *intend*? This indeed is properly our *Charity* towards them; and to Pray to God, for *their* Sake, and ours, that he would *confound* their Deſigns, and *convert* their Hearts: But to ſooth, and encourage them in their ill Practices by our Silence; and not to proteſt againſt them, in the *Name* of *God* and *Religion:* but to *gloze* 'em with Lies, and to ſpeak *ſmooth* things to them, and Jude 16. to *have their perſons in admiration becauſe of* our own *advantage*; is this our *Charity*? 'Tis our *Sin* and *Folly*, indeed, and we ſhall find it ſo hereafter, when God ſhall call us to a *ſevere* Account, for contributing ſo much to the Corruption of the Age we live in.

Again, *Thirdly*, Men will urge, as a *Cloak* for their own Fears, and want of *Courage*, that they like the *Cauſe* well enough, in which we are engag'd, but don't altogether ſo well approve our *Methods* of *purſuing* it.

'Tis really Matter of our *great Concern*, that *wiſe and good Men*, who have ſhewn their Zeal for Truth ſo *often*, and are ready, *we don't doubt*, to do ſo *always*, ſhould ever fall under a Suſpicion that does not belong to them, by diſſenting from their Brethren upon

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Scruples of this Nature. If the Cauſe be neceſſary, and the Means be lawful, and, more than that, eſteem'd probable likewiſe, in the Opinions of *wiſe* and *good* Men, upon whom we may depend at any time; Why ſhould we endanger the *End* it ſelf, when 'tis of ſuch mighty Conſequence to our Happineſs, by our little Differences about the *Means*, which are of no Value, but what they derive from their Fitneſs to ſerve the *End*? However, we muſt not condemn every Man for a *Deſerter*, that does not always fall in exactly with our *Opinion*; when he has ever given *before*, and is prepar'd to give *again*, the higheſt Evidence of his Truth and *Honeſty*. 'Tis the *unhappineſs ſometimes*, and not *always* the *fault*, of good Men, that they cannot come up to a perfect Harmony in Judgment: And we muſt in Chriſtian Candour and Charity ſpare thoſe Men, whom we know to be our Friends by other Arguments, though they may not *always* entirely conſent to our *Opinions*, how good ſoever. *Time* and *Reflection* may rectify thoſe Miſtakes, which were *innocent* at firſt; and unite us all in the ſame purſuit, by the ſame Means to the ſame bleſſed End and Conſequence, the firm *ſecurity* of our *Holy Church*, and the perpetual *Eſtabliſhment* of our *Peace*.

But *Fools* and *Knaves* make uſe of this Pretence upon quite other Grounds; to *conceal* their own *baſe* Fears, and Nakedneſs, or to *diſappoint* the End it ſelf, by a *counterfeit Rejection* of the Means. Thus, for Inſtance, Theſe *good Men* tell us, 'That we are quite '*miſtaken* in the preſent Controverſy between them and us about our '*Church*: They love the *Church*, they ſay, as well as we, and are as 'much concern'd for its Eſtabliſhment; but they don't think, we 'take the readieſt way to preſerve it; and therefore they propoſe 'and follow a much better, if we will believe them: which is not 'by Heats and *perverſe Diſputings*, by *zealous Contentions* and *fierce* '*Struglings*, againſt the Enemies of Truth: but by the *milder Methods* 'of *Kindneſs* and *Moderation*; by the gentle Influences of a *healing* 'Spirit, to ſoften the *perverſe*, and *harſh* Tempers of Men; to *ſmooth* 'the *rugged* Humours, and to *allay* thoſe *intemperate* Heats, and 'Heart-burning amongſt *Brethren*; and ſo to make up the Breaches 'of our Peace, by the *Cement* of a Chriſtian *Compliance* and *Charity*. But do they think to impoſe upon us ſtill, by all this *Cant*, this idle *Harangue* of Words, which we have anſwer'd over and over? Chriſtian Charity and Moderation are *excellent* Things in their true Name, and Notion, we grant it; and God forbid we ſhould deny it: But ſurely, they are ſuch Qualities, that if we may gueſs any Thing by theſe Men's Behaviour, they *have not* the leaſt *Part* nor *Share* in *themſelves*; nor would be concern'd that

others

others ſhould, unleſs 'twere to ſerve their own bad Ends the better by it. The Truth is, they are afraid of appearing againſt a *Party,* which they have ſuch a *Liking* for, and which they find ſo very Powerful, and ſo many Ways able to do them Good or Hurt, to raiſe or ſink, to prefer or *keep 'em under;* and this is the *true* Reaſon, that they will not venture to diſoblige them, even becauſe of their own *baſe Hopes* and *Fears.* And ſince they can't for Shame of the World, openly *renounce* their Church, they are for rendring all Means and Methods to maintain and preſerve it, as *ineffectual* as poſſible; So to gratify their own *good Friends,* and our *worſt Enemies,* the more. And 'tis certain they are the better able to ſerve theſe Men's Deſigns upon us, whilſt they continue in the *Boſom* of our Church, than out of it; becauſe they can by this Means find a Place, wherein to *ſtab* it more *effectually,* and ſo carry off the greater Renown, and richer Spoils by doing ſo.

But what *Methods* are they *after all,* by which we endeavour to ſupport our Church, which theſe Men can't find in their Hearts to *approve* of, and *comply* with? I have not time to reckon up particulars; but I appeal to the Senſe of every Man, whether they are not ſuch, as, if we could ſucceed in them, would *only* put it beyond theſe Men's Power to do us any further *Miſchief:* and that is the *true* Reaſon, indeed, they are offended with us, and there lies the real Ground of their Complaint.

I ſhall mention but one *Refuge* more, behind which Men ſeek to hide their Want of *Courage,* and *Reſolution* in a good Cauſe; and that is,

Fourthly, That 'tis to *no Purpoſe* for them to *appear* in it; they can *do* but little Good, for their own Part, they ſay, towards the Promoting it; and therefore they think it enough for them to *Wiſh* it well, and ſo throw up all further Concern about it, by an idle *Reliance* upon other Men, that are better able to provide for its Succeſs.

And if it *does* happen to ſucceed, through the Bleſſing of *God,* and *other Men's* faithful Care and Pains, no Thanks however to theſe *good* Men for it: They may ſhare indeed in the *preſent* Benefits, and enjoy themſelves at the Expence of other Men's Sweat and Blood, *Men* much better than themſelves; but let them not expect any Share of the Reward *hereafter* for Well-doing, which ſhall be given only *to the good and faithful Servant.*

But if the ſlender Hopes of Succeſs, which theſe Men offer as a *Pretence* for themſelves, were never ſo *True;* Is it any *Reaſon* for us to neglect the leaſt part, or inſtance of our Duty? Why do we not

not then renounce our *Orders?* Why do we not throw up our *Miniſtry*? Why do we take this Pains to *preach* to Men, and to preſs upon them their Duty at all times, *in Seaſon*, and *out of Seaſon?* When we find we can do ſo little Good by it, *after all;* and have no more Thanks at laſt for all our Pains; but, it may be, are *perſecuted* and *hated* for it; or at leaſt *diſcountenanc'd;* and that by *thoſe Men* too, from *whom,* conſidering the *Character* they bear amongſt us, and their near *Relation* to our *Order,* we might expect another kind of Treatment.

But howſoever Men may deal with us, let us not *be weary nor faint in our minds:* Our Reward is *ſure* to us, though it be not *preſent:* In the mean time, Are the Satisfactions of a good Conſcience Nothing with us? The *bright* and *chearful* Reflections that we have done our Duty, and anſwer'd the Truſt repos'd in us by God, and our *Superiors,* according to the Rank and Order in which the *Providence* of God has plac'd us? Every Man is able to contribute ſomething towards the common Good of his *Country,* and the Support of his *Religion;* either by his own faithful Endeavours, or by his Advice and Encouragement, or at leaſt by his Prayers; which, if he can do no more, God will accept of, and reward as much as all the reſt: but if he can, and will not, his *Prayers* are *Hypocriſy,* his *Dependence* is *Vain,* and his *End* will be *Diſappointment.* Let every Man then do the beſt he can, and leave the *Succeſs* of all to God; And *then* whatſoever may be the *Iſſue,* 'twill not be ſo much his *Trouble,* becauſe 'twas not his *Fault.*

How great Evils are coming upon us, what times of Suffering the Providence of God may have reſerv'd for us, He knows beſt in his own infinite Wiſdom. But, ſurely, we ought in Prudence to lay in the beſt *Supports* we are able, the beſt Stock of Comforts we can get together, againſt a *time,* when all will be *little enough* to ſuſtain, and bear up our Spirits. But, *now,* if it be through our own Negligence and Inadvertence, that we come to ſuffer, we, by this means, deprive our ſelves of one of the main *Pillars* of our *Support* in *Trouble,* and ſhall be ready to *bite* our *Tongues,* with Anguiſh, and *vexation of ſpirit,* in the Day we come to *feel* the Evils, which, but for our own ſtupid Folly, might have been once *prevented.* If God *ſmite the gourd, that* he has *brought over us* for our *comfort,* because we would not *labour for it,* nor be at the pains to *make it grow;* how ſhall we be able to anſwer him, unleſs it be in ſuch peeviſh Language, as *that* of his *angry Prophet;* which will be a freſh Aggravation of our Miſery, and a new Enhancement of our Guilt. Jonah. 4. 7, &c.

And *thus* I have endeavour'd to *conſider* the *Excuſes*, that are moſt uſual with Men in this Caſe, and to anſwer them by Arguments *proper* and *peculiar* to every one.

But, there is *one*, beſides all theſe, more *general* yet, and which reaches 'em all together, and which the *Wiſdom* of God, in *Solomon*, makes uſe of in the *Text*, drawn from the Conſideration, How little theſe vain Excuſes will avail us in the Preſence of *Almighty God*, when he comes to take Account of all our Actions: *If thou ſayeſt, Behold, we knew it not: Doth not he that pondereth the heart conſider it? and he that keepeth thy ſoul, doth not he know it? and ſhall not he render to every man according to his works?*

Does not he count all the *Wandrings* of our Steps, be they never ſo *ſecret*? Obſerve and weigh every *Prevarication* of our Spirits? *Sound* our *Corruptions* to the very *Root* of them? See through the Frame and Temper of every one of our Souls? Take *ſpecial* Notice upon what Principles we begin to move at any time, how we go on, and what Ends we drive at? And will not he *deal* with us according to his own *infallible Knowledge*, and not our *vain* and *hypocritical Pretences*? To what Purpoſe is it then for us to *walk* in the *Dark* for a little while, and to impoſe upon our ſelves, and the reſt of the World, for a *few* Days, and by ſhuffling, and tricking with God, and our own Conſciences, in the mean time, to betray our Cauſe, and our ſelves, to utter Ruine? When the Time is haſtening upon us all, and not far off from any one of us; when all theſe falſe *Colours* ſhall ſurely fade, all theſe formal *Diſguiſes* be taken off, and both our Actions and Principles paſs under a ſevere Trial, and our whole Behaviour be ſcann'd, and ſifted to the *bottom*! How *loathſome* ſhall we then
Pr. 13. 5. appear, *in that day*, when the Hand of Juſtice ſhall dragg us out of all our *holes*, and *lurking places*, into the Preſence of the *Great God*, and his *Holy Angels*, with all our *Baſeneſs*, and *Corruptions* about us! *We*, that cannot *now* bear a little Shame of the World, and of Men our *Fellow-ſervants*, and therefore ſeek thus to make *Hypocriſy* our
Iſ. 28. 15. *Covering*, and *Lies our Refuge*: How ſhall we be Blank'd and Confounded, in that Day, to ſee all our cloſe and wicked *Intrigues*, all our *Deeds of Darkneſs*, brought out into the full Splendor of *heavenly Light*, and before the whole *Univerſe* of Creatures! *How* much therefore does it concern us all, and of what infinite Conſequence is it to every one of us, that we take care to behave our ſelves uprightly in all our Ways; without *Guile* and *Hypocriſy*; with all Openneſs, Sincerity and Truth; as in the Preſence of our *Great Judge*, and *Searcher* of all our *Hearts*! That, when He ſhall approve, and acquit us in the *Laſt Day*, whatever we may have

ſuffer'd.

suffer'd, in the mean time, from the Hands of Men, for a good Cause, either in our Name, or Interest, or otherwise; we may *then* have the everlasting Praise, and Approbation of the whole World. But if He shall finally condemn us, whatever vain Applauses we may *now* give our selves, for our indirect Dealings, or receive from the vain World about us; we shall then, to our *eternal Shame*, be *exploded* and *hiss'd* off the Stage for *ever*.

Will it be *then* any Satisfaction to the Wisdom and Justice of our Judge, or any Comfort to our selves, when we have betray'd our Duty, and suffer'd Innocence, or a just and upright Cause, to sink under Injury and Oppression, for want of *putting to* our Hand, for its Deliverance and Rescue, for us to say *slightly* and *vainly*, before God and the Holy Angels, *that it was an error, Behold we knew it not, non putâram*, the Refuge of *Fools*, in whom *he has no pleasure?* When Men have destroy'd Themselves, their Church, and Country, by their *treacherous Dealing*; and have ruin'd one of the best Constitutions in the World, by their Coldness, and want of Zeal, not to say by worse Methods; What will they be able to answer for themselves! How will they *hold up* their *Faces* to *God* and *us*, in the Day of their own, and our Calamity! Will they plead *Ignorance* as their Excuse? Will they say, *Behold, we knew it not*; that they were not *aware* of it; that they could never have *imagin'd* once, Things would have come to this; and that they are now *sorry* for it? But have we not often *forewarn'd* them of the Danger of these Things! Have we not plainly *foreshewn* them, what would be the *Consequence*; *told* 'em, *over* and *over*, *what would come of it*, and they would not hear us!

Eccl. 5. 6. Eccl. 5. 4.

I shall make no Reflections upon any body, but I pray God all those, that *have the Rule over us*, and by God's Providence are appointed the Watch-men over our *Holy Church*, and should always stand upon her *Towers of Defence*, would in due time lay this to heart; Lest by too *forward* and easy Compliances, by vain Proposals and Overtures of *Reconciliation*, they admit an Enemy within the *Gates of Zion*, which afterwards 'twill be beyond their Power to *drive* out, or to *controul*; An Enemy, that shall *enter into her Sanctuaries, break down all the carved work thereof with axes and hammers, and defile her holy places to the ground*: with rude and unhallow'd Hands, utterly *despoil* our *Church* of all its excellent Ornaments, and *beauty of Holiness*; and those, that preside over *it*, *themselves*, of all their Power, Honour, and *Authority*, which *Christ has given* them, *for edification, but not for* our *destruction*.

Ps. 48. 12. Ps. 87. 2. Ps. 74. 6, 7 Ps. 110. 3. 2 Cor. 10. 8.

I ſhall now crave your Patience a *moment* longer, only juſt to mention the Neceſſity there is of a firm *Courage* and *Reſolution* of Mind in thoſe, that are intruſted, more eſpecially, with the *Adminiſtration* of *Judgment*, and *Juſtice:* I ſhall do it in as few words as poſſible, that I may not ſeem to give Advice to my *Superiors*.

For, *My Lords*, I would not preſume to queſtion the *publick Wiſdom*, by which You are appointed to this *High* and *Honourable* Office. And when we take upon us, at any time, to ſpeak theſe things before You, 'tis not to tell *You*, and the *World*, what You *ought* to *be*, but what You *are*; Inveſted with an Authority of infinite Conſequence to the Peace, and Happineſs of our Church and State, and endued with qualities equal to the execution of it. 'Tis hardly poſſible for *us*, who live and act ſo far beneath You, to conceive, or apprehend the numerous Temptations and Difficulties You are ſure to meet with in Your *High Stations;* and which *indeed* require the moſt *invincible Courage* and *firm Integrity* of Mind. The Frowns, and ſecret Menaces of Men in Power; the Malice of the Crafty; the Pride, and Inſolence of the Haughty; the Factions of the Turbulent; the reſtleſs Cries, and Importunities of the Miſerable and Afflicted, (with many more ſuch things, which we cannot think of) muſt all be prevented, or ſuſtain'd by You, in the ſteddy Proſecution of your Office. When *cunning*, and *ill* Men ſhall ſeek to pervert the *Law*, and to *turn aſide* the Courſe of *Judgment*, they receive their Check from *You*. When a *great*, and *powerful Sinner* ſhall preſume upon Impunity; when an *Honourable Thief*, or a *Right Worſhipful Murderer*, ſhall expect the *Law* ſhould condeſcend to his *Quality*, and that God, and his *Vice-gerents* muſt deal with him as a *Gentleman*, 'tis *You* that ſet him free from his Miſtake, and let him *feel* by his *preſent* Sentence, what he muſt *expect hereafter*. And all this You are ſure to be aſſaulted with from *without*, beſides what You are liable to feel from *within*, from your own *Bowels*, in the ſeverer Part of Juſtice; from your own *good*, *tender* and *merciful* Nature; Which may ſometimes betray a Man, if he does not take heed, to *wave* his Duty, when no Terrors could affright him, or Violence over-power him to *deſert* it. And therefore God Almighty, by an expreſs Precept, thought it neceſſary to ſet a Guard upon this weak and ſofter ſide of our Temper, to prevent the Evils it might otherwiſe expoſe us to, and to cut off all Excuſes for Com-
Ex. 23. 3. miſſion of them. *Neither ſhalt thou countenance a poor man in his cauſe*, was the direct Command of that *merciful God*, who profeſſes himſelf, all along, in his Holy Word, to have *no* more near and tender Reſpect for any, than for the *poor* and *needy*. But ſo *very much*

much, we find, is he concern'd for the right Execution of *Justice* in the World, that no Pretence of Mercy in Men must presume to *triumph over it:* Though his own infinite Mercy does always so, (and 'tis well for us that it does so,) being founded at once upon infinite Goodness, and conducted by infallible Wisdom, which ours, we are sure, cannot be.

These, *My Lords*, and many more such Objections, incident to the Execution of your Office, render *it* a Matter of your *Fear*, rather than your *Ambition:* And all the *Honours*, that you receive from it, are too little to compensate the great *Charge*, and *Burden* you sustain under it: *Enough* to make a Man almost *tremble* to *think* of them; and to *justify* the Counsel of the *wise Man* in the highest *Import*, and to the utmost *Consequence* of it, *Seek not to be Judge, being not able to take away iniquity, lest at any time thou fear the person of the mighty, and lay a stumbling-block in the way of thy uprightness.* Eccl. 7.6.

What remains then, as the Conclusion of this *long* Discourse; But that *You*, and we, and all, by a faithful Discharge of our Duty in our several Degrees and Places, endeavour to engage the Protection of Heaven on our Side; and to draw down a Blessing upon our Church and Nation, *if it may be a lengthening of our tranquility*! To Dan. 4.27. that End, that we be never *courted* from our Duty by any Favours, nor *frighted* by any Terrors, of the World. Let us arise therefore, 2 Sam. and *be of good Courage, at such a time as this is* more especially, and 10. 12. let us *play the men for our people, and for the Cities of our God.* Let Esth. 4.14. us do our own Duty for the Defence of our Religion and Country, and leave the Success of all to God Almighty: Who can tell, but He will yet Bless us, and the Work shall yet prosper in our Hands? *If we find favour in his eyes*, He will either prevent our Sufferings, or, in his own good Time, *remove* them. And though He should suffer evil Men for a while *to ride over our heads*, and even to *cast us out* Ps. 66. 12. *from God's inheritance:* yet, we have found, He can by his Almighty 2 Sam. Power *bring us again*, and *shew us both it, and his holy habitation.* 14. 16. But, *if He* now *say thus unto* us, *I have no delight in* you, *behold here* 2 Sam. 13. we are, *let him do to* us *as seemeth good unto him.* What can we do, 25. 6. but hide *our faces in the dust*, and confess with the deepest Humility, and Dejection of Spirit before him; *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and* Ps. 119. *just are thy judgments*! 'Tis sure our Sins are great and numerous, 137. and have deserv'd it from him: Our Profaneness and Hypocrisy, our Non-proficiency under the best Means of Grace, in one of the best Churches, and under the purest Worship in the World; Our going off from our old Principles, and shuffling with our Consciences; Our trifling with Oaths, and bringing down the *high and holy name of God*

to

to our own Vanity, to ſecure our preſent, little, inconſiderable Intereſts; Theſe things may have made Him ſee it Neceſſary, to let
Iſ. 48. 10. us paſs through the *Furnace of Affliction* to *refine* us from our *Droſs*. But let us return, and amend our Ways, and ſtill hope for Mercy. Or if He has otherwiſe determined concerning us, and the Hand of Juſtice muſt take hold of us, *Yet, O merciful God, chaſtiſe us in meaſure, we beſeech thee, correct us with judgment, not in thine anger,*
Jer. 10. 24. 46. 28. 1 Chron. 21. 13. *leſt thou bring us to nothing: Take the matter into thine own hand; we commit our ſelves unto thee; for very great are thy mercies; but ſuffer us not any more to fall into the hands of men.*

From whoſe Deſigns and Practices againſt us, now and always, God of his infinite Mercies deliver us all, for Jeſus Chriſt *his ſake: To whom with thee,* O Father, *and the* Bleſſed Spirit, *be aſcrib'd all Praiſe, Honour, Power, Might, Majeſty, and Dominion, now and for evermore.* **Amen.**

FINIS.